

CREATIVITY IN THE KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

by

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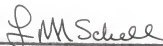
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I. INTRODUCTION

The development of creativity has become a new emphasis in education, a new goal for teachers who are socially sensitive to the need to conserve the potentialities of every child. Creativity contributes to individual self-fulfillment and is essential to the progress of society. In these times of standardization, mass production, stereotyped entertainment, and pressures for conforming, it is particularly important that teachers conserve and help to develop the uniqueness of each personality. Creativeness is the step beyond the conventional to new ideas, new relationships, new expression of thoughts and feelings, and new discoveries.¹

Most authorities on creativity believe that creativity is a quality which each human being is capable of exhibiting. Furthermore, they believe that creativity can be increased in most individuals and can increase in our society as a whole if we will put into practice what is now known about conditions which help foster the development of creativity.

"There is little doubt in the minds of many educators that the schools must assume the responsibility of nurturing the creative abilities of our youth."² Creativity has become the topic of interest in public schools because of advances made in education. "In the past,

¹John I. Goodlad, Some Propositions in Search of Schools (Washington, D. C.: Department of Elementary School Principals, National Education Association, 1962), p. 11.

²R. E. Myers and E. P. Torrance, Invitations to Thinking and Doing (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1965), p. 5.

we have been able to survive with static goals and concepts. Things are changing so rapidly that we can survive no longer, if we insist on thinking and living in static terms and returning to the 'old ways'."³

Originality and creativity have long been concerns on the level of scientific research and technical education in such areas as art and music. The modern school is extending this emphasis for creative expression to all fields of general education from kindergarten through college.⁴

Throughout the period of kindergarten attendance, children seek appropriate means for expressing thoughts and feelings, to satisfy the intense urge to move beyond their present developmental level. By providing continual opportunities for thinking, feeling, and experiencing, the teacher can increase to the fullest the kindergarten child's capacity to become original and creative. The writer believes that the key to guiding kindergarten children to self-fulfillment lies in using those moments each day which have potential for involving children in thinking, feeling, and experiencing creatively. As skilled, sensitive teachers exploit such moments, hopefully there will begin to emerge individuals who are eager and able to meet and cope with challenge and change creatively.

³E. Paul Torrance, Applications of Creativity Research in the Elementary School (New York: The New World Foundation, 1965), p. 16.

⁴William H. Burton and Helen Heffernan, The Step Beyond Creativity (Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1964), p. 1.

Statement of the Problem

There are at least four teacher characteristics essential for creative teaching in a kindergarten classroom. These are (1) an awareness of the differences in children, (2) an extending of each child's life space, (3) an acceptance which children experience as success, and (4) knowing the "what" to teach as well as the "how". The purpose of this report is to explore the literature on creativity, extract some major criteria, and develop a set of lessons designed to encourage the expression of creativity by kindergarten children based on the acceptance of the characteristics of creative teaching at the kindergarten level.

Definitions of Creativity

Since a person can react creatively in many different ways, it is not strange that there are many definitions of creativity. E. Paul Torrance defines creativity as a

process of sensing difficulties, problems, gaps in information, missing elements; making guesses or formulating hypotheses about these deficiencies, testing these guesses and possibly revising and retesting them; and finally communicating the results.⁵

The writer has accepted Smith's definition that the creative process is "relating previously unrelated things."⁶ It seems to be a deliberate process of forming a new combination or patterning of words, movements, materials, ideas, or symbols and in some way making the

⁵E. Paul Torrance, op. cit., p. 16.

⁶Paul Smith, Creativity: An Examination of the Creative Process (New York: Hasting House Publishers, Inc., 1959), p. 23.

product available to others. The writer believes the very quality of creativity has been shown if an individual has made something new to himself that is satisfying and in that sense useful to him. He has related things previously unrelated in his experience.

THE LITTLE BOY

--by Helen E. Buckley

Once a little boy went to school.
He was quite a little boy.
And it was quite a big school.
But when the little boy
Found that he could go to his room,
By walking right in from the door outside,
He was happy.
And the school did not seem
Quite so big any more.

One morning,
When the little boy had been in school awhile,
The teacher said:
"Today we are going to make a picture."
"Good!" thought the little boy.
He liked to make pictures.
He could make all kinds:
Lions and tigers,
Chickens and cows,
Trains and boats--
And he took out his box of crayons
And began to draw.

But the teacher said: "Wait!
It is not time to begin!"
And she waited until everyone looked ready.

"Now," said the teacher,
"We are going to make flowers."
"Good!" thought the little boy,
He liked to make flowers,
And he began to make beautiful ones
With his pink and orange and blue crayons.

But the teacher said, "Wait!
And I will show you how."

And she drew a flower on the blackboard.
It was red, with a green stem.

"There," said the teacher,
 "Now you may begin."

The little boy looked at the teacher's flower.
 Then he looked at his own flower.
 He liked his flower better than the teacher's
 But he did not say this,
 He just turned his paper over
 And made a flower like the teacher's
 It was red, with a green stem.

On another day,
 When the little boy had opened
 The door from the outside all by himself,
 The teacher said:
 "Today we are going to make something with clay."
 "Good!" thought the little boy,
 He liked clay.
 He could make all kinds of things with clay.
 Snakes and snowmen,
 Elephants and mice,
 Cars and trucks--
 And he began to pull and pinch
 His ball of clay.

But the teacher said:
 "Wait! It is not time to begin!"
 And she waited until everyone looked ready.

"Now," said the teacher,
 "We are going to make a dish."
 "Good!" thought the little boy,
 He liked to make dishes,
 And he began to make some
 That were all shapes and sizes.

But the teacher said, "Wait!
 And I will show you how."

And she showed everyone how to make
 One deep dish.

"There," said the teacher,
 "Now you may begin."

The little boy looked at the teacher's dish.
 Then he looked at his own.
 He liked his dishes better than the teacher's.
 But he did not say this.
 He just rolled his clay into a big ball again.

And made a dish like the teacher's.
It was a deep dish.

And pretty soon
The little boy learned to wait,
And to watch,
And to make things just like the teacher.
And pretty soon
He didn't make things of his own anymore.

Then it happened
That the little boy and his family
Moved to another house,
In another city,
And the little boy
Had to go to another school.

This school was even bigger
Than his other one,
And there was no door from the outside
Into his room.
He had to go up some big steps,
And walk down a long hall
To get to his room.

And the very first day
He was there,
The teacher said:
"Today we are going to make a picture."
"Good!" thought the little boy,
And he waited for the teacher
To tell him what to do.
But the teacher didn't say anything.
She just walked around the room.

When she came to the little boy
She said, "Don't you want to make a picture?"
"Yes," said the little boy,
"What are we going to make?"
"I don't know until you make it," said the teacher.
"How shall I make it?" asked the little boy.
"Why, any way you like," said the teacher.
"And any color?" asked the little boy.
"Any color," said the teacher.
"If everyone made the same picture,
And used the same colors,
How would I know who made what,
And which was which?"
"I don't know," said the little boy.

And he began to make pink and orange and blue flowers.

He liked his new school . . .
 Even if it didn't have a door
 Right in from the outside!

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The scientific study of creativity is not new as Eisner points out. As early as 1898 a study was made of the imaginative responses of students and faculty at Harvard. Other studies have appeared from time to time through the years. The Gestalt psychologists, Freud and Jung, studied a process called "insight" and talked about the creative unconscious. General psychologists such as Norman C. Meier studied creativity in the arts. However, it was in the 1950's that research in creativity came into its own through the work of J. P. Guilford, Morris Stein, and Ross Mooney, who constructed new test devices and new research methods for the scientific study of creativity.⁷

The literature included in this report will encompass only the materials published within the past decade that are pertinent to the kinds of creativity, the characteristics of creative children, the factors which affect creativity in children, and the teacher qualities necessary for stimulating creativity.

Kinds of Creativity

According to Elliot W. Eisner⁸ there are four kinds of behaviors

⁷Elliot W. Eisner, "Creativity in Education--A Summary Statement," The Instructor, June, 1963, p. 3.

⁸Ibid., p. 7.

or products which ordinarily are considered creative. One type of creativity that children may display in the classroom is that of organizing elements--words, colors, tones, their own speech--in highly aesthetic ways. Their ability lies in the highly sensitive way they can put things together; they are aesthetically creative.

A second group of individuals are highly ingenious in the way they use ordinary objects, words, or qualities. Such children might use paper, pencils, or rulers in very highly original ways. Their stories are often quite imaginative and insightful. These children expand the limits of objects or ideas that most adults usually take for granted.

Inventing is called another type of creativity. Here the individual uses objects and ideas in combination so that an entirely new product is developed. Examples of individuals who showed inventive behavior are Edison, Marconi, and Gutenberg. These men used the products that were available during their lifetimes to create essentially new products. Many of these products were used by later inventors for creating still other inventions.

A fourth type of creativity is most rare. In this type of creativity an individual questions the assumptions which underlie the work of other investigations within his field. Examples of individuals who showed this type of creativity are Freud, Binet, and Einstein.

Characteristics of Creative Children

"Creative individuals are supposed to have a high theoretical and aesthetic interest within their being; they have an openness to

inner experience."⁹ Instead of reducing their experience immediately into slogans, stereotyped symbols, and pat formulas, they try to respond to their own inner experience and create something with it. They have a high level of perception and an ability to play with elements and concepts. Both Piaget and Suchman agree that the functioning of assimilation and accommodation are "powerful tools which are fundamental to productive and autonomous thought and at the same time transferable to new situations."¹⁰

According to E. Paul Torrance¹¹ children who rate highly on measures of creativity are quite disturbing in classroom groups in elementary schools because they tend to manifest behaviors which call forth sanctions by their peers and alienation from their peers and teachers. The relationships between measures of intelligence and measures of creativity differ only slightly from grade to grade between the sexes. Most of the coefficients of correlation are relatively low (around .30) but are higher among girls than boys. When the highly creative were compared with the highly intelligent, the latter were better known by their teachers and were considered as more desirable pupils than were the former. Torrance further states that students who were both highly creative and highly intelligent, in general, were

⁹Hilda Taba, "Opportunities for Creativity in Education for Exceptional Children," in Readings for Educational Psychology, 2nd ed. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1964), pp. 217-228.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 225.

¹¹E. Paul Torrance, "Explorations in Creative Thinking," in Readings for Educational Psychology, 2nd ed. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1964), pp. 229-233.

considered by their teachers as more dominant, more independent, more studious, and harder working than the students in other groups.

Factors related to Creativity in Children

Some general findings about factors related to creativity in individuals are the following:

1. Children with a quick sense of humor seem to be more creative than those without it.
2. Individuals may be very creative in one field and not creative in any other; a few show great ability over several fields.
3. Late maturers seem to be more flexible thinkers than early maturers; they may have to be quick and inventive to keep up.
4. Children who are highly creative in one way are not always highly creative in other ways.
5. Highly creative individuals do not go to pieces in situations where the guidelines or directions are not clear.
6. Creative children explore a range of possible solutions to a problem before they make a selection of the ones they are going to use or employ.¹²

Bisner further states that psychological safety is important in encouraging creative thinking. If children feel anxious or unsure, if they feel threatened by their peers or their teachers, or by fear of failure, it is not very likely they will be willing to risk thinking in highly creative ways.¹³ Instead of pushing ahead with imaginative speculations, these children will be more likely to stay with what is safe, conventional, and certain.

¹²Eisner, op. cit., p. 7.

¹³Ibid., p. 85.

Another factor that seems to affect creativity is the level of skill a person has in the area in which he is working. Performing in a highly creative way within an area of human activity makes the use of certain skills and knowledge necessary. The likelihood of thinking or working creatively within a certain field is slight if these skills and knowledge are absent. A child will be unable to concern himself with the aesthetic or expressive aspects of his work.¹⁴

Teacher Qualities Necessary for Stimulating Creativity

Basically the characteristics of the creative teacher are quite similar to those displayed by a creative pupil. According to William H. Burton and Helen Hefferman, they are the following:

1. Know the purposes to be served. They are not quite the same as when teaching for other outcomes.
2. Know the nature of the creative process as well as one can within the type of teacher training available.
3. Know the type of environment, both physical and psychological, and the operations within that environment that stimulate creativity.¹⁵

The teacher's role in stimulating creativity is in part like any good teaching, but it is in part also quite different because of differences in purpose, process, and circumstances. Lowenfeld makes several statements on the general level which are useful.

Whatever a teacher does in stimulating creativeness greatly depends on three factors: (1) his own personality, of which his

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵William H. Burton and Helen Hefferman. One Step Beyond: Creativity. (Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1964), p. 22.

own creativeness, his degree of sensitivity, and flexible relationships to environment are an important part; (2) his ability to put himself into the place of others; and (3) his understanding and knowledge of the needs of those whom he is teaching.¹⁶

Teachers who strive to have their students learn through more creative ways use a wide variety of thinking and learning processes. When they try to have students learn by a variety of ways they may find that some will learn by thinking and testing on their own. "Perhaps striving for new and varied experiences keeps ones creative spirit alive."¹⁷

No one can formally set down the many factors in the stimulation of creativity. Lee and Lee presented a summary, although not exhaustive, of the many suggestions on how teachers can aid children to respond creatively.

1. Provide an atmosphere in which each child is accepted so he feels that he belongs, has status, and the respect of both teachers and peers.
2. Help each child to understand and accept himself and his own thinking.
3. Give courage and confidence to each child to try, accept the results whatever they are, and encourage him to evaluate and try again.
4. Provide freedom--for a purpose; not freedom from responsibility, but freedom to explore, to experiment with himself with his environment, and freedom to learn.
5. Reward the inventive, the different, rather than the following of the prescribed formula to the last letter.
6. Search for alternatives, and help the child to find other

¹⁶Victor Lowenfeld, Creative and Mental Growth. 3rd ed. (New York: MacMillan Co., 1957), pp. 3, 24.

¹⁷Calvin W. Taylor, "Clues to Creative Thinking," The Instructor, January, 1964, p. 5.

ways, not to stick with the obvious.

7. Make the questioning attitude a main goal of teaching.
8. Listen to the child in order to understand 'his' thinking and feeling, to see how the situation looks to him.¹⁸

It is important for teachers to exploit carefully and subtly any hint of creativity which reveals itself in the classroom. One of the best ways to make certain that creativity is not frightened away is to show children that their ideas have value. Wilt¹⁹ found in an analysis of pupil responses when teachers made efforts to show children that their ideas have value the following most frequently reported reassuring reactions:

Expressed pleasure, smiled, brightened	44 per cent
Expressed approval of classmate's idea	37 per cent
Followed through with idea, imitated	32 per cent
Became enthusiastically absorbed with idea	29 per cent
Acceptance of originator as a person increased	24 per cent
Interest in learning increased	24 per cent
Confidence increased in other areas of work	16 per cent

The following report by a first-grade teacher illustrates why it is important to show children that their ideas have value.

The class was writing a poem to set to music. We were discussing snow and its qualities, trying to discover rhyming words. Jess is bashful and hesitates to contribute although he has a vivid imagination. He mumbled something about snow looking like jewels. He seemed embarrassed that snow looked like jewels to him. I was very pleased that he could see such beautiful things as jewels in the snow, and I encouraged him to tell us why snow made him think of jewels and what kind of jewels he thought of. He sensed the approval of the class and their approving of 'snow looking like jewels.' He said that snow seemed to look like diamonds. When

¹⁸J. Murray Lee and Dorris May Lee, The Child and His Curriculum 3rd ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1960), pp. 511-512.

¹⁹Wilt, "Applying Principles for Rewarding Creative Thinking," in Rewarding Creative Behavior: Experiments in Classroom Activity by E. Paul Torrance (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1965), pp. 58-60.

asked why he thought so, he said that it sparkles. We were able to use his idea in our song. "It sparkled like a diamond bright." This led Jess to have more self-confidence, and he expresses himself more freely. The class benefits by this, since he has an exceptionally large vocabulary plus a vivid imagination. The children were delighted with his choice of words, for it sparked their imaginations as well as contributed to the song we were writing. ²⁰

III. CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

This section includes lessons on art, motor activities, dramatization and creative possibilities inherent in a spontaneous incident which may serve as guides or possible examples of using varied approaches to creative activities within the classroom. The skills and abilities which they build are those which are used in all areas of the curriculum, skills of thinking critically and creatively. Its purpose is to encourage children in the regular classrooms to discover and develop their individual talents by involving them in activities which will cause them to think and to act creatively. It is hoped these lessons will stimulate teachers to think of other ways to help their pupils to learn, to think, and to live creatively.

Box Animals

Materials: Small boxes, airplane cement, paper brads and fasteners, staples and paint.

Group Size: Twenty to twenty-five pupils.

Time: Three periods, each twenty minutes in length.

Introduction: Read the story Elephant's Wish by B. Munari (Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1959).

²⁰Ibid.

Method: The teacher brings a number of small boxes to the classroom. These may include milk cartons, cosmetic boxes, stationery boxes, boxes for toothpaste, ink, adhesive tape, pencils, and shoe boxes all placed in a large grocery sack tightly closed on the teacher's desk. The teacher asks, "What do you think is in the sack?" There is a short guessing game with the teacher looking in the sack and stating:

1. There is something red.
2. There is something little.
3. There is something square.

To arouse interest and give more clues say, "There's a zoo or barnyard in this sack," or something similar. Then empty the sack and say, "How could there be a zoo or barnyard?" Stack them one on the other.

1. What does it suggest?
2. Who will choose a box which might be the body of an animal?
3. Is there a box to use for a neck? A head? A tail?
4. What about legs? (How many, long, short, thin, fat, etc.)
5. "Is this a real animal?"

The children must think how boxes can be transformed into animals-- which involves seeing new relationships.

1. How will the boxes stay together? With the help of several children, glue, staple and fasten the parts together and set them aside to dry. The children then think up a name for the animal, decide where it lives and even make up stories about adventures it might have.

2. Would each of you like to make an animal of your own which you could name and about which you could make up stories?

3. Does someone have suggestions of how we might get boxes?

Ask each child to bring some boxes from home. Discuss appropriate sizes. The teacher should have a few in reserve for "forgetees" or "too fewers."

After constructing animals, they should be painted. The shiny glazed surface of some boxes resists powder paint. Add a bit of detergent to the paint which makes it stick to the cardboard surfaces. Since the animals can be imaginary or very free versions of real animals, pupils can use--and the teacher can encourage--a free approach in choosing colors to paint them.

Finally, some of the children may think of extra details which will give added life to the animals. Feathers, bits of ribbon or yarn or buttons may be added if the children wish to do so. These, too, could be brought from home and placed in a special box of scrap materials.

Throughout the construction and painting of the animals the teacher can circulate about the room encouraging imagination and creativity by questions and statements such as:

1. "Look at the eyes on this animal."
2. "How could you make it look like it had long hair?"
3. "What could you do to show stripes?"
4. "Could an imaginary animal have five legs?"
5. "Some animals have spots (horns) on them."
6. "Could an animal have both wings and legs?"

Puppets

Materials: Small paper sacks, man's sock, fast drying airplane cement, rags, old nylon hose, yarn, string, tempera paint, scrap materials, dowel sticks (10-12 inches).

Group size: Eight to ten pupils.

Time: Twenty minutes, two different days.

Introduction: Have several puppets available for the children to experiment with and use. Let the children see what they can do with a puppet (play games, put on shows, etc.)

Method: Discuss characters from stories which the children have heard or read about. Perhaps Cinderella would be a good beginning place. Introduce the puppet "Cinderella." Tell the story once again using the puppet.

The teacher could ask some of the following questions and make some statements such as follows?

1. If you could be someone you wished to be like, who would you be?
2. Let's list some people we know about on this chart. Encourage children to think about others not on list (astronauts, doctors, nurses, teachers, clowns, etc.)
3. Could we make a puppet?
4. What can we use?
5. Who will help?

A paper sack puppet is quite easy to make. The sack may be small or as big as a grocery sack. It may be filled with torn strips of paper and a stick inserted so that it extends almost to the top. After tying a string around the "neck," a face can be painted on a separate sheet of paper, cut out and pasted on the front of the sack or it may be painted directly on the sack before it is filled.

There is also the sock puppet made by filling the toe of a man's sock with rags or old nylon hose, pushing a dowel stick up into the

stuffing, and tying a bit of cloth around the neck. Again, tempera paint works fine for the features and yarn or string for hair can be glued on to finish the puppet.

Throughout the construction and painting of the puppets, the teacher can circulate about the room encouraging imagination and creativity by questions and statements such as?

1. "How could you make eyes on your puppet?"
2. "How could you make it look like your puppet has long hair? Is bald?"
3. "What could you do to show the nose?" (Big bump, little hole button, etc.)
4. "Could your puppet have a happy face?" (sad face, long face, round face, square face, etc.)

The following day pupils are given the opportunity to put on a play or tell a make-believe story about "their puppet." (Dr. Dan, the Bandage Man, Jo-Jo the clown could play several tricks on his friends, or the astronaut could do "Count-down".) The children also may name their puppets.

Exploring Movements

Introduction to these lessons which present variations to exploring movements:

1. They are creative in that children discover new and varied kinds of combinations of movements.
2. They compare and see different relationships in the "way animals and people" walk, move, etc.

3. They may discover that their body can move as a whole or in parts.

4. They may discover the way we walk or move affects the way we feel.

Each lesson is on creative movement exploration.

Locomotor movements--walking. Group size: Twenty to twenty-five pupils. Time: Fifteen minutes.

Teacher might ask some of these questions:

1. How did you walk to school this morning?
2. Did anyone have to get here in a hurry?
3. Did anyone have lots of time to get here?
4. Did anyone walk with another pal?

These are only examples of questions which might help children start thinking about walking. Further discussions and questions may bring forth the many different ways people walk. The children act out the various ways of walking such as the following: high, low, cross-legged, smooth, loose-legged, with a sore toe, slow, fast, bumpy, with a walking cane, and many others.

The following is a similar approach to movement exploration. How can we get from here to there, from this spot to that spot, from this door and around the room and back to the door again? When movement is started in this manner, children have opportunities to devise new and different ways of moving from one place to another.

Kinds of walking and animal walking. Group size: Twenty to twenty-five pupils. Time: Fifteen minutes.

With the walk we discover that we can go high, low, or somewhere in between. We have short, long, fast, slow, hard, soft, heavy and light walks. The teacher could ask, "What other ways could we walk?" The children could discover all sorts of variations such as:

1. Walking on heels.
2. Peg-legged.
3. On the outside or the inside of the feet.
4. With the toes turned in or out.
5. With the knees in or out.
6. They may just lumber along.
7. Walk crooked all over.

Possible teacher questions and comments could be the following:

1. What other things walk besides people?
2. Could you walk like an animal that lives in the zoo? On a farm?
3. Some of you remind me of an animal in the zoo by the way you are walking.
4. What animals do you think of as you walk?

This may lead into a discussion and further exploration about the way a bear would move in contrast to a cute, little, lively monkey, etc. Other discussions could center around which animals, insects, etc., do walk, how they walk, why they walk, and ascertaining whether they do not walk.

Walk progression. Group size: Twenty to twenty-five pupils.

Time: Fifteen minutes.

The teacher and children could have a discussion about "how they

walk." Sometimes our walk is affected by the way we feel, and we find we have certain "qualities" in our walking. Possible teacher comments and questions could be the following as the children try walking:

1. "How does a robot walk?" (jerky)
2. "Can you walk like Raggedy Ann?" (loose)
3. "Some of you are walking like a baby walks!"
4. "What kind of a walk might we call the one Wooden William does? (stiff like a stiltman)
5. "How do you walk when sad? Mad? Lonely? Happy? Etc."
6. "Do you feel any different when you walk lightly or heavily?"
7. "Can you think of anything that seems like a heavy walk?"
8. "How could you walk so that we could hear every step?"
9. "Could you walk so we could hardly hear you?"
10. "What does walking lightly make you think of?"

Body movements. Group size: Twenty to twenty-five pupils.

Time: Fifteen minutes.

In trying to help a child discover his body can move as a whole, or in parts, he often discovers he has large parts and small parts which can be moved simultaneously. Creative rhythmic movement is the child's interpretation of thoughts and feelings expressed through the use of his body.

Possible questions and comments that the teacher may use are the following:

1. See if you can move the very smallest part of you. (Fingers, toes, eyes, nose, etc.)

2. How can you move two parts? (Result in a variety of combinations!)

3. What do you suppose is the biggest part of you, and can you move it? (Respond with trunk, hips, and shoulders)

Children soon become aware of the many ways they can use their bodies, and they learn to enjoy creative movement for its own sake such as:

1. Going through the air when skipping.
2. Leaping higher and higher.
3. Just finding out how different parts move.

4. Children discover various kinds of combinations of movement based on the walk such as (a) walk and leap; (b) walk and jump; (c) walk with a twist; (d) walk with a push and pull; (e) walk with a bounce.

The children actually try various methods and combinations of movements. All the while the teacher could make a few of these comments and questions:

1. "How could you walk with a twist?"
2. "Could you walk leaping higher and higher?"
3. "Can you move through the air by skipping?"
4. "Could you have a bounce to your walk?"

Creative Dramatization Experience

Materials: Berlin, Paul and Anne. Little Duck. Chicago: Ginn 1964. Record.

Group size: Twenty to twenty-five pupils.

Time: Twenty-five minute period.

Here is a book about a little duck. See if you can guess what is happening to the duck on each page.

1. The teacher shows the book to the children.
2. Each child is encouraged to express in words how it might feel to be little duck (in the shell, all alone on the river, tossed by the ocean waves).
3. Every now and then ask, "How would YOU do that?"
4. Show genuine delight with the children's individual responses.
5. Try to encourage original interpretations.

Following the constant reference to the emotional and dramatic elements, the children and teacher may dramatize the story of Little Duck. The teacher could make such comments as the following as the story is read:

1. "Little Duck goes way down in the water."
2. "I like the way you try to reach the sea gull in the air!"
3. "How could we do the duck walk?"
4. "How could we shake out our feathers?"

This is the story that follows:

Do you know where ducks are before they are born? . . . you be the duck inside the shell . . . you're inside the shell . . . you're ready to come out. But you've never been born before. You don't know how. First, you try to break the shell with your back. You push with your back . . . pushing, pushing more and harder, but the shell won't break.

I wonder what I have that might crack the shell? Oh, my beak. You try to break the shell with your beak . . . peck . . . peck . . .

peck . . . and peck . . . and finally, out pops your head! . . . You look all around at the beautiful world. You see some flowers . . . some trees . . . some children . . . some brother and sister ducks . . . and what is that over there? . . .

A swimming pond. You step . . . out of your shell . . . dry your wings . . . and all the little ducks follow mother duck to the swimming pond . . . you waddle and waddle . . . you're learning to walk on the smooth water very well. But . . . you really think you're bigger than you really are. You decide to go for a swim all by yourself.

You swim way out until you can't see any more ducks . . . just lots of water . . . do you know how far you went? . . . You swam way out into the river. Way off in the distance you see something moving . . . and you think, "Maybe that's my Mommy. I'd better hurry and follow her." You hurry so fast you don't notice a big log floating on the water. Before you can catch your breath, you've gone BUMP! into the log and SPLASH! into the water . . . you pick yourself up . . . shake out your feathers . . . and hurry on. The next time you see a log you know just what to do . . . you spread your wings and WHEE! Over you go! . . . and here you are.

But it wasn't your Mommy at all, was it? In fact, it wasn't anybody's Mommy. What was it? That's right, a big ship . . . do you know how far you had followed it . . . The water is rough and wavy. You can't walk smoothly anymore. You're out in the OCEAN! . . . you have to walk . . . walk . . . walk . . . wave . . . wave . . . a storm is coming up. The waves are getting bigger and bigger. They make you go UP and DOWN, UP and Down, UP and DOWN . . . UP . . . DOWN . . . UP

and DOWN . . .

What do you see flying high in the sky? That's right, a seagull. Let's ask him for help. How does a duck say "Help?" Quack, quack . . . quack, quack . . . quack, quack . . . QUACK, QUACK . . . do you think the seagull heard you? . . . Pretend you're the seagull. Spread your wings and come swooping down to get the little duck.

Put little duck on your back, but tell him to hold on tight because the wind is blowing hard . . . now fly little duck home. But keep your eyes on where little duck lives because the wind is making you go round and around . . . did little duck get home safely?

Yes . . . there are his mother and brothers and sisters . . . they fly to each other and dance TOGETHER . . . Did little duck ever go out to the ocean again? . . . well, not alone anyway!

Creative Possibilities Inherent in a Spontaneous Incident

This exercise involves the pupils in a problem-solving situation. It illustrates how an insightful, imaginative teacher can take advantage of situations which arise during the course of a normal school day to foster creative behavior in pupils. The following situation actually happened to the writer who did some of the things described. There is a side to this lesson which is fanciful and imaginative, and there is a side which is experimental and evaluative. After the children have generated some hypotheses about the ball's difficulty, it is important that they test them out. The testing-out of ideas is an all-important part of the creative process. For this paper, the teacher's behavior has been elaborated on and suggestions added to suggest some of the possibilities for creative teaching which seem inherent to the situation.

Materials: Two balls, large chart tablet and magic marker.

Group size: Twenty to twenty-five pupils.

Time: Forty minutes (two periods of twenty minutes each).

Procedure: A playground ball got caught in a tree outside the school house. It was so high no one could get it down at the time. We looked at the ball. We talked about the ball and its position. We stayed on the playground until recess time was over, frequently looking at the ball. After returning to the classroom the children kept talking about the ball.

The teacher used some of these questions and comments to stir the imagination of the children:

1. If the ball could talk, what do you think it would say?
2. What do you think the ball is thinking?
3. How does it feel caught high up in a tree?
4. How does it feel looking down on us?
5. How would you feel if you were that ball?
6. What would you see from high up in that tree?
7. Do you know how the ball got up in the tree?
8. What would happen if we couldn't get it down?

After much discussing, the class of children went back out to see the ball in the tree. A little girl suggested using a stick to poke it loose to get it down. There was no stick around long enough to reach the ball and get it loose from its location. One boy suggested throwing other things at it to get it down. Another pupil commented, "Rocks and dirt clods are too dangerous to be used."

Marc said, "Hey, I know something. How about using another ball?"

The hypothesis was tested and proved feasible. Another ball was thrown four times until the first one was knocked loose and fell to the ground.

After returning to the classroom, we had an excellent opportunity for discussion about getting the ball down. A talented little boy in the class suggested we might make up a song about the ball. By using the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell" the various children and the teacher arranged these words for singing. The teacher printed them on a large chart tablet.

The ball is in the tree,
The ball is in the tree,
Poor, scared, lonely ball
Way high up in the tree.

How will we get it down?
How will we get it down?
Poor, scared, lonely ball
How will we get it down?

Throw rocks and clods at it,
Throw rocks and clods at it,
No, that is not very safe
So we'll just have to think.

A stick will knock it down;
A stick will knock it down,
Yes, that will solve our problem,
But no stick could we find.

Then use another ball,
Then use another ball,
Throw it high and knock it down
And we have solved it all!

This exercise might quite naturally lead to exploring other possibilities. Some other activities could include (1) drawing pictures, (2) creative stories ("If I Were a Ball"), (3) poems, (4) dramatization, and (5) the teacher reading a story such as "Robert Goddard's Idea." The reference is as follows:

Verral, C. S. Robert Goddard Father of the Space Age. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963.

In our situation we dramatized the song. The children pretended or imagined themselves being the ball as we continued to sing our new song.

There was a discussion on safety that followed our experience, also. Some questions and comments discussed were the following:

1. What things do we throw?
2. What things do we not throw? Why not?
3. What might happen? (broken windows, bruises or broken bones of children, etc.)

There are many opportunities for each teacher to use spontaneously rather than waiting to teach a structured lesson of creative activities.

IV. REFERENCES FOR CREATIVE BEHAVIOR AND GROWTH

In making this sample listing of references for creative behavior and growth, the writer has classified them as (1) articles, (2) children's books and/or (3) professional books. The writer has included certain children's books because they seem to stir imaginations and encourage pupils to develop new ideas and new solutions to problems. Some of the stories are used to arouse unusual questions.

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V. CONCLUSION

The development of creativity has great significance in our world today. Creativity is a force which seems to activate all the capacities of the individual toward self-fulfillment. It is the approach taken toward problem solving, discovery, critical thinking, and inventiveness. Without question, creativity is vitally important. We know creativity can be taught or fostered in a school setting and direct instruction may be better than waiting for incidental opportunities to present themselves.

Possibilities for developing individual creativity occur when

the provisions are made for a learning climate which is conducive to creative production and the nurturing of it. The classroom climate must be one in which the student feels psychologically safe and where individualized thinking is encouraged and appreciated. Reflected in the classroom environment are experimentation, critical thinking, and the use of fundamental skills to develop hypotheses. The classroom should be a laboratory for learning and not a cubicle for conformity. Divergent thinking must be encouraged. This type of thinking permits the development of hypotheses and the freedom to search for data in order to support or reject theories. It also helps the child to move in directions that provide resources and ideas upon which to base conclusions.

Children must be given many and continuous opportunities for creative production. Creative production means creating new combinations, seeing new relationships, expanding upon what is already known, redefining information to discover new uses--in essence, looking at the old in new ways. Children must be encouraged to apply creative abilities to every aspect of learning.

To answer the question, "Where is the beginning to developing the creative capacity in each pupil?", teachers should:

1. Make students aware of the creative potential within themselves. Encourage students to develop new ideas and new solutions to problems.
2. Understand that creativity is not a superimposed, predetermined expectation exactly prescribed for every learner.
3. Respect the children's unusual questions, and imaginative and

unusual ideas.

4. Decide to know more about this magnificent dimension of human potential.

5. Communicate to each student that his ideas do have value. Try to prove this conviction to your class by using the pupils' ideas whenever possible.

6. Understand that manifested creativity is the result of the development of many intellectual factors possessed by all individuals.

7. Become aware of some of the factors of the intellect which, when developed, allow for creative production.

8. Allow each student to practice creative production without the threat of judgmental evaluation.

Today teachers and students are engaged in a great teaching-learning endeavor. The kindergarten teacher has the unique role of introducing and fostering beginning creative thinking and behavior. Each child must be allowed to develop to the full extent of his creative potential in order to insure maximum individual contributions to tomorrow's society. The kindergarten is the logical place to start.

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CREATIVITY IN THE KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

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The development of creativity has become a new emphasis in education, a new goal for teachers who are socially sensitive to the need to conserve the potentialities of every child. Creativity contributes to individual self-fulfillment and is essential to the progress of society. In these times of standardization, mass production, stereotyped entertainment, and pressures for conforming, it is particularly important that teachers conserve and help to develop the uniqueness of each personality.

This report explored the literature on creativity, extracted some major criteria, and presented a set of lessons designed to encourage the expression of creativity by kindergarten children and listed some of the characteristics of creative teaching at the kindergarten level.

The writer believes that creativity is the process of relating previously unrelated things. It seems to be a deliberate process of forming a new combination or patterning of words, movements, materials, ideas, or symbols and in some way making the product available to others. The writer believes the very quality of creativity has been shown if an individual has made something new to himself that is satisfying and in that sense useful to him; has related things previously unrelated in his experience.

Suggested creative activities included lessons on art, motor activities, dramatization, and creative possibilities inherent in a spontaneous incident. It is hoped these activities will serve as guides or possible examples of varied approaches to creativity within the classroom.

The list of references for creative behavior and growth have been classified as (1) articles, (2) children's books, and/or (3) professional

books. The writer included certain children's books because they seem to have the ability to stir imagination and to encourage pupils to develop new ideas and new solutions to problems. Some of the stories are used to arouse unusual questions.

Today the kindergarten teacher has the unique role of introducing and fostering beginning creative thinking and behavior. Each child must be allowed to develop to the full extent of his creative potential in order to insure maximum individual contributions to tomorrow's society. The kindergarten is the logical place to start.